

Message Text

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TAGS: ENRG, TECH, OSCI, KS

SUBJECT: ROKG DESIRE TO ESTABLISH BILATERAL SCIENCE AND
TECHNOLOGY FOUNDATION AS BASIS FOR FUTURE U.S.-ROK
COOPERATION

SUMMARY: IN A RECENT DISCUSSION WITH AMBASSADOR, ROK
SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY MINISTER PROPOSED POST-A.I.D.
BILATERAL SCIENTIFIC ORGANIZATION AS BASIS FUTURE U.S.-ROK
TECHNICAL EXCHANGE AND WORKING-LEVEL COMMUNICATION. EMBASSY
BELIEVES SOME TYPE OF ORGANIZATION KEYED TO THIS GOAL IS
NECESSARY AND DESIRABLE, AND WE THUS SOLICIT WASHINGTON'S
REACTION. DISCUSSION ALSO POINTED UP CONTINUING IF NOT
INCREASING NECESSITY OF SCIENCE ATTACHE IN EMBASSY.

1. IN MAY 1, 1975 DISCUSSION WITH AMBASSADOR, ROK MINISTER
FOR SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY DR. CHOI HYUNG-SUP SUGGESTED THE
ESTABLISHMENT OF A POST-AID BILATERAL ORGANIZATION FOR
SCIENTIFIC AND TECHNICAL COOPERATION. MINISTER CHOI NOTED
SUCCESS OF U.S. ASSISTANCE PROGRAM IN PAST BUT OBSERVED THAT
A NEW FRAMEWORK FOR U.S.-ROK COOPERATION AND EXCHANGE WAS
NECESSARY FOR THE FUTURE. THE MINISTER REQUESTED A MATURE
PARTNERSHIP BASED ON NEW REALITIES INCLUDING END OF AID
RELATIONSHIP. CHOI ACKNOWLEDGED THAT THE S AND T EXCHANGE
WOULD BE MAINLY ONE WAY FOR PRESENT BUT EMPHASIZED THE
NEED FOR BOTH NATIONS TO KEEP THE IDEA EXCHANGE PIPELINE
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OPEN AND FUNCTIONAL.

2. MINISTER CHOI FURTHER DEFINED THE PROPOSED ORGANIZATION AS BEING STRUCTURALLY SIMILAR TO THE US-ISRAEL BINATIONAL SCIENCE FOUNDATION ESTABLISHED 1972 BUT WITH A SOMEWHAT DIFFERENT PURPOSE. THE US-ROK FOUNDATION WOULD BE JOINTLY ENDOWED AND CONCERN ITSELF WITH ASSISTANCE TO THE EDUCATIONAL SECTOR AS WELL AS THE SCIENTIFIC SECTOR, AND WOULD HAVE AS A PURPOSE THE UPGRADING OF ROK HIGHER EDUCATION SYSTEM. THE US-ROK RELATIONSHIP WOULD EVOLVE INTO THAT OF SCIENTIFIC RESEARCH AND COOPERATION, LIKE THAT OF THE US-ISRAELI FOUNDATION, ONLY WHEN THE ROK WAS CAPABLE OF UNDERTAKING SUCH WORK.

3. CHOI PROVIDED AMBASSADOR WITH BROAD OUTLINE OF PROPOSED SCIENTIFIC EXCHANGE AGREEMENT AS WELL AS LENGTHY STATEMENT ON PAST EXCHANGES WITH US, INCLUDING NATIONAL ACADEMY OF SCIENCE STUDY ON THIS SUBJECT. COPIES OF THESE BEING POUCHED TO EA/K.

4. EMBASSY BELIEVES THAT DEVELOPMENT OF THE POST-AID SCIENTIFIC RELATIONSHIP WITH ROK MERITS CAREFUL STUDY, ALTHOUGH NOT NECESSARILY ALONG LINES PROPOSED BY CHOI. IN LOOKING AHEAD TO NEW LONGER-TERM PARTNERSHIPS WITH KOREA SUCH A SCIENTIFIC RELATIONSHIP COULD HAVE BENEFITS FOR BOTH COUNTRIES IF CAREFULLY DEVELOPED. FOR PRESENT, AMBASSADOR ADVISED CHOI WE WOULD REVIEW HIS PROPOSAL AND WISH TO CONTINUE DIALOGUE. WOULD APPRECIATE ANY INITIAL WASHINGTON REACTION.

5. RECOMMENDATION: CONVERSATION WITH MINISTER CHOI ON SCIENCE EXCHANGE AND NUCLEAR REPROCESSING (REPORTED SEPTTEL) AS WELL AS OTHER EMBASSY ACTIVITIES IN THIS AREA IMPRESS US WITH URGENT NEED FOR SCIENCE ATTACHE IN EMBASSY. VERY IRREGULAR VISITS BY REGIONAL SCIENCE ATTACHE AND ERDA REPRESENTATIVE IN TOKYO DO NOT MEET REQUIREMENT HERE FOR PAYING INCREASINGLY CLOSE ATTENTION TO KOREAN SCIENCE ACTIVITIES AS THEY AFFECT OUR INTERESTS IN THIS COUNTRY. SNEIDER

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